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PRESS RELEASE

UTILISE NATURAL RESOURCES PROPERLY – SOLUTION TO WORLD ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

During an interview with the editor of the Mathrubhumi newspaper¹ the Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat outlined ways in which the world could alleviate the current global financial crisis. During the interview he also touched on contemporary issues such as global terrorism, conflict resolution and the continued persecution of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat in Muslim countries.

Speaking about the current financial problems, His Holiness stated that the development of agriculture had a crucial role to play. He said that in recent times Governments had prioritised the development of urban towns and cities and neglected rural activities and that this trend had to be reversed. He said:

***“At the moment the focus is on urban areas which has meant that people are leaving rural areas and over populating the cities and towns. This has led to greater unemployment as the number of people is exceeding the number of jobs. The Governments must therefore realise that agriculture has to be developed.*”**

¹ National Malayan newspaper. Print circulation 1.2million, readership 8million. Editor in Chief: K Gopalakrishnan, 40minute interview took place 11.40am-12.20am, 26 November 2008 at Ahmadiyya Mosque Calicut

Today the effects of globalisation are such that when people (who live in rural areas) see on television images of the developed world their instincts tell them to ‘move out’ to the wider world, without even knowing what they would do when they get there.”

Upon being asked if a focus on agriculture could solve the current financial crisis, His Holiness stated that it was certainly an issue of great importance and that this was because the development of farming and other forms of agriculture was necessary as a first step to bring about an end to food poverty. He said:

“The first priority of man is always food. Then the second priority is clothes to wear and the third is a home to live in. As I said the first priority is food and food cannot be produced without agriculture. We (in the sub-continent) have such a climate that we can grow all types of foods. India is doing this to an extent but in Pakistan they are not... Instead of using our own resources we are wasting them. We have scientists of all types, genetic scientists, horticulturists etc yet what we lack is a basic support to the individual farmers at a grassroots level.”

Then His Holiness spoke about terrorism and its causes. He said:

“Terrorism occurs when a person knows that another person is taking what is rightfully his. This injustice leads to a reaction. However the person who reacts is not rightly guided and so people with their own vested interests utilise the reaction for their own means. With regard religion the Holy Qur’an says that there is no compulsion in religion and it also says that every person is free to choose his faith and cannot be subject to any kind of force.”

Regarding conflict resolution, His Holiness said that it was imperative that where any two countries were in dispute they ought to be left to settle their differences without influence or interference from third party states. The only exception to this was when one country arbitrarily attacked another because when such a violation of a country's sovereignty took place then a third party country was duty bound to help defend the country which had been attacked.

The interview concluded with a discussion about the continued persecution of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat. His Holiness said that Pakistan did not realise that it was causing itself to suffer by its continued persecution of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat. The reason for this was that many brilliant minds were being lost to other countries as Ahmadis had been forced to migrate for sanctuary in other countries around the world. His Holiness said that although the Jamaat does all it can to try and bring an end to this persecution, ultimately the matter rests with Allah.

Speaking about the issue of 'tolerance' in society, His Holiness congratulated Western countries for their efforts in this respect. He mentioned that recently he had addressed the UK Parliament and been given the opportunity to speak clearly about the problems of the world. The Parliamentarians, Ambassadors and other Dignitaries in attendance listened attentively throughout and congratulated him on highlighting many of the ills in contemporary society. This illustrated their tolerance and willingness to listen to the views of others.

End of Release

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